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Leading Team Development Activities

Leading team development activities can be a great way to build community in your classroom as well as grow a group's capacity for reflection. Here are some key elements and suggestions to keep in mind:

Safety Procedures

- ➔ Clearly explain safety expectations for each activity
- ➔ Maintain both physical and emotional safety at all times

Group Contract: It's important to establish a contract with your group and an effective group contracts contains 4 components

1. Safety: Participants agree to keep themselves and each other both physically and emotionally safe 2. Respect: Participants agree to respect one another and decisions their teammates make 3. Effort: Participants agree to make their best effort and commit to the goals and values of their group 4. Team Values & Expectations: Participants establish and agree to a set of values to guide their work.
    a. Embarc Core Values: Courage, Drive, Change Agency, Curiosity, Leadership, Collaboration ➔ Once your group has established their contact have them "seal the deal" with a gesture such as a high-five or all-in-hands-in cheer.

Processing the Experience

- ➔ Model Active Listening:
    - ◆ Listen carefully to each speaker and be aware of nonverbal behavior
    - ◆ Check for understanding - paraphrase what you hear, ask clarifying questions
    - ◆ Observe vs Interpret - Use observations such as: "I noticed you stepped away… can you tell us about that?" vs. interpretation: "You must have been scared when you stepped away."
- ➔ Use open-ended questions and question statements
    - ◆ Open-ended questions that begin with what, why, when, and how that elicit more than a yes or no answer
    - ◆ Add specifics to a question that seem too open-ended: If "How did that make you feel?" results in empty stares try "How did it make you feel when Jason agreed to be blindfolded?"
    - ◆ Questions statements offer a direct way to prompt reflection:
        - ● Change "What do you think you did well?" into => "Name 3 things you did well together." ● "Tell us what you felt when you were blindfolded. How did that change your approach?"

Different Ways To Process Besides Questions

- ➔ ***Open forum***: "Let's hear a brief comment on…"
- ➔ ***Whip around***: Ask for a word, phrase, or comment from each team member.
- ➔ ***Pair and share:*** Ask participants to share a thought, feeling, or favorite something with a partner. ➔ ***Small group:*** Dyads or triads provide a setting to discuss something that may be difficult in front of the whole group
- ➔ ***Solo Reflection:*** Designate a quiet time and suggest a topic for reflection
- ➔ ***Consensus:*** Ask for group feedback regarding an opinion or pending decision
    - ◆ Thumbs up (total agreement), Thumbs sideways (not sure, more discussion needed), Thumbs down (no way!)
- ➔ ***Rate:*** as with consensus, hold up fingers to rate an issue on a scale of 1-5

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- ***Question Stems***: Provide students with a question stem to answer - they may share with a pair or whip around a circle to report out
- ***Quotes:*** Thoughts quotes can give students a anchor to relate their thoughts to. Give students a quote on a card and have them make a connection to the idea in the qoute or activity from the day.

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Team Development Activities: Below you will find a list of a variety of team development activities that may use little to no props and the instructions are easily found in a Google Search.

No Prop Activities	➔ Blind line up ➔ Clumps ➔ Bobsled ➔ Biggest Fan ➔ Blind count off ➔ Longest line ➔ People to people
Tarp Activities	➔ Tarp flip ➔ Peek-a-who ➔ Minefield ➔ Memory Maze ➔ Variety of tarp activities...
Paper/Carpet Squares	➔ Shrinking island ➔ Traffic Jam
Hula Hoops	➔ Hoop pass ➔ Helium Hula Hoop
Ropes/Webbing	➔ Raccoon circles ➔ Pizza toss ➔ Pass the knot ➔ Blind shapes ➔ All tied up (small robes, bandanas, shoelaces, etc.)
Tossables	➔ Group juggle ➔ Minefield ➔ Toss a name
Team Building Books	➔ Find Something to DO by Jim Cain ➔ Affordable Portables: A Working Book of Initiative Activities & Problem Solving Element by Chris Cavert ➔ Team Challenges: 170+ Group Activities ➔ 104 Activities That Build:... by Alanna Jones ➔ Teambuilding with Teens by Mariam G. MacGregor

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